

## SHORT COMMUNICATIONS

**The Black Bog Ant *Formica caudida* (Smith) (Hymenoptera: Formicidae) in Surrey** – On 23 July 2003, we visited the Pirbright Ranges to survey Hagthorne Bog for invertebrates. We both picked up singleton workers of a shiny black ant on open Sphagnetum areas. Subsequently on 18 August we visited the area again with John Pontin and David Baldock to look for further examples of this ant, which we were convinced was *F. caudida* (Smith). Workers were swept from open mire areas near Colony Bog, and in Strawberry Bottom where a nest was also located containing a few dozen workers.

The ants were only found in very open parts of the mire areas with little tall emergent vegetation (National Vegetation Classification M21 *Narthecium ossifragum*-*Sphagnum pilosum* valley mire habitats (Rodwell, 1991), and avoided areas tending towards M25 *Molinia* dominated communities.

The lack of any previous Surrey record is somewhat surprising given the attentions of workers such as Horace Donisthorpe, but access into this hazardous training area has always been very limited, and it does support by far and away the largest mire areas in the county. The Pirbright Bogs have much in common with the larger New Forest mire systems, and most of the rarer invertebrates present in Hagthorne, Colony and Strawberry Bottom bogs occur in the New Forest.

Many thanks to the following: Mary Adler for organising the meetings, the Ministry of Defence for allowing us access to the training area and John Pontin for confirming the identification of this species. – JONTY DENTON, Kingsmead, Wield Road, Alton, Hants GU34 5NJ, UK. GRAHAM A. COLLINS, 15 Hurst Way, South Croydon, Surrey CR2 7AP, UK.

### REFERENCE

- Rodwell, J. S. (ed) 1991. *British Plant Communities 2: Mires & Heaths*. Cambridge University Press.

**A recent record of *Hippodamia 13-punctata* (L.) (Coleoptera: Coccinellidae) from Dorset.** – On 25 August 2002, a single male of this distinctive-looking ladybird was captured at Hengistbury Head, Dorset whilst recording Diptera and aculeate Hymenoptera on a fine sunny day. The precise location of capture is not recalled, though the day's surveying concentrated almost exclusively on the west slope of Warren Hill and the heathland north and north-west of this (around NGR SZ169908) and involved much sweeping of heather and acid grassland. No surveying of wetland (the favoured habitat) took place, though saltmarsh and *Phragmites* occur nearby. I am grateful to Roger Booth of the Natural History Museum for confirming the specimen and to the ranger service for permitting recording at the site. This may be the first British record of the beetle since 1952, though it could just represent a vagrant. The same day produced a good list of scarcer bees and wasps, including *Andrena argentata* Smith, *Bombus Immilis* Illiger (a particularly strong population), *Cerceris ruficornis* (Fab.), *Cryptocheilus notatus* (Rossius), *Gorytes bicinctus* (Rossius), *Mutilla europaea* L., *Nomada fuscata* Panzer, *Sphcodes longulus* von Hagens and *S. reticulatus* Thomson. – STEVEN J. FALK, Warwickshire Museum, MarketPlace, Warwick CV34 4SA. E-mail: Stevenfalk@warwickshire.gov.uk.